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WINDY HILL GARDENS

"Peyton's Peerless Peonies"

RAPIDAN,

VIRGINIA

JAPANESE TYPE PEONIES

The so-called Japanese peonies embrace many of the most beautiful varieties grown in our gardens. Their garden effect is the same as that of the singles, but they are really double peonies as all their stamens have been transformed into staminodes or petaloids that bear no pollen. These staminodes take many forms. The three most common ones are as follows: First those in which the ends of the staminodes are flattened and the base still has the rounded form of the stamens, but has thickened considerably. These staminodes are more or less krinkled and curled and are edged and tipped yellow. Usually the color of the guard petals is more or less suffused throughout them. In the second form, the staminodes form an almost perfect half sphere, usually rather small, of the same color as the guards and tipped a different color or shade. A third form has the staminodes transformed into narrow petals of the same color as the guard petals with occasional yellow or white markings. This last form is almost if not quite a true anemone type peony.

The great majority of the Japs belong to the first form. To me the loveliest peony of them all is Isami Jishi, or, as it is hideously and erroneously usually written, Isani Gidui. With great circular guard petals of immaculate white and a center of pale yellow staminodes and carpels tipped the same, it is truly a dream flower that has become real. Its plant habit is not of the best. Identical except that the carpels are tipped pink and stems a little better, is Kelway's White Lady, while the very rare Hakodate is their formidable rival. Equal beauty is claimed for Good's Gem, Jan van Leeuwen and Shaylor's Sunburst. These three I have yet to see in bloom. Of almost equal value we have Shiro-Sangai, Exquisite First and Yokohama. Purity is also a white of remarkable

beauty. White Queen is a very large flower with a center of staminodes that approach the third form, but which preserve the yellow tips. This is a splendid flower. Jeanne Lapandry is a new Dessert-Doriat Jap with great white guards and a center of very long, narrow staminodes pale yellow in color that is distinctive and beautiful. Lady Astor is a dainty white of small stature like the famous Virginian for whom it is named. Takaradama and Toro-no-maki are whites that deserve a place in any garden. Other good ones are Eileen Kelway, Jacqueline, Lemon Queen, Margaret Atwood, O-Fugi and Snow Wheel.

Some of the most famous Japs are found in the pinks of this class. First should be mentioned Tamate-Boku, the Jewel Box, which is generally considered the finest of the Japs of any class, and yet its position as such may be hotly contested. It bears immense flowers of a rather dark pink even on very small plants. It has a large center of long yellow tipped staminodes. The plant is of medium height, but very slow growth. It blooms in late season. Equally beautiful in my estimation, of much quicker growth, earlier blooming and of quite similar coloring, pink with a large center of yellow tipped staminodes that lights up with a marvelous glow in full sunlight and very fine and distinctive foliage is the variety that has been decided upon to bear the name Ama-no-sode. A splendid flower is found in Tokio, early, tall and of somewhat similar color. Fuji-zome-gonoro is a fine lavender pink, lightly tipped yellow that has also been sold as Ama-no-sode and Tamate-Boku. Whatever may be the name, it is a peony worth growing in any garden. Kukeni Jishi is a very large light pink that is probably the finest of its color. Shaylor's Alma is a splendid pink that sometimes throws a crown. His Aureolin is a pink that has as yellow a center as any peony known. It also occasionally has a few crown petals. Ostrich Plume is a beauty of pink that fades white. In Yellow King we have a very tall, early (with me) and very large flower, pale pink with a center of very long yellow staminodes that is of a beauty that is seldom equaled. Antwerpen is a coming light pink that will make all others look to their laurels. Mr. G. F. Hemerik is a plant of distinctive habit, bearing abundantly, large flowers of excellent rose pink. Rose of Nippon and Moon-Yen-Clare are pinks of distinctive shades that are well worth while. Goddess is a tall rose-colored flower that is probably the best in its shade. Francois is very tall, of a peculiar shade of pink and one of the showiest in the garden. Henri Potin is a good light

pink that will hold its own in the best company. Other good pinks are Akalu, Altar Candles, Aureole, Fabiola, Gypsy (Queen sometimes added), Innocence and Seioba.

In reds we have some of the most splendid and showy peonies that are grown. The colors in the red Japs and singles are often much better than the doubles.

One of the first Japs grown in this country was Mikado. It was brought here in 1893 in the exhibit of the Japanese Government at the World's Fair in Chicago. Today it is hard to equal for general excellence. It is tall, vigorous and a very brilliant red. Probably the largest of the reds and one of the best is Some-Ganoko. Its plant habit might be improved upon. Fuyajo is a very dark red that has as yet to be equalled in its particular shade of red. Four dark reds of recent introduction are: Gumm's Onahama, which has taken its place as one of the best; Auten's Nippon Beauty. Very late, splendid color, excellent habit, one of the best growers and very floriferous, it will hold its own against all comers for many years. Mrs. Lewis's Prince Ito, a little earlier, is another of which equally good things might be said, while Babcock's Hari-ai-nin is one that is destined to make a big name for itself when well known. One of the best of the earlier reds is Crimson and Gold. No better and more showy flower can be found. Currant Jap from the garden of Mrs. Edward Harding and noted so favorably in her book, *Peonies for the Little Garden*, is excellent. Mrs. Hobart M. Cable is a very light red that stands alone in its color. Akashigata and Gold Mine are two splendid fellows which are described as rose, but to me the garden effect is red. Rashoomon is a red of much beauty. King of England and Knight of the Thistle are reds of different shades that are very beautiful. Edward VII is another of great value. Other good reds of varying shades are Attraction, Beacon Light, Bobbie Bee, Claire, Departing Sun, Dragon's Head, Eva, Eveline, Flamboyant, or as it is also known, Kamenno Kegoromo, Geisha, and Orange Price. There are two Japs that more nearly approach blue than any other peonies: Blue Bird and Wisteria. These are both flowers that are worth growing.

The Japs of the second form, those that have a small center almost spherical, are not numerous as yet. The ones best known to me are: Sir Henry Stone a lavender pink whose petaloids are tipped light red; Yeso a white with some yellow and pink tints tipped pink; and Yoochi-no-tsuki, the ground color of which is

white but decidedly tinted lavender with staminodes tipped darker lavender. All of these are very distinctive flowers and stand well up towards the top.

Of the third or almost anemone form there are quite a number. Of these the following will be mentioned as very beautiful and best known to me: Crystal Queen is pure white with no other markings. Probably identical is Fuji-mine as it grows in my garden. These two are beautiful and chaste beyond description. They are rather dwarf and slow increasers. In the pinks Esther is a very large light lavender pink fading to almost white. It probably does not belong to the Japs at all, but is usually listed among them. It is a very distinct and beautiful peony. Petite Renne darker in color, smaller, is daintiness itself. Torpilleur is either dark pink or light red as you will, the Manual says carmine. It belongs in the same class as Petite Renee. Instituteur Doriat is a glorious big dazzling red, tall and upright.

There are a number of very new Japs that as yet I know little about and many of which are not yet growing in my garden. One I imported in 1929 and which I am sure will be an object of great interest to all in the peony world who knew and loved the late Mr. B. H. Farr is the one Van Leeuwen, of Holland, has named for him. It seems to be a very good grower and of a mixture of shades of pink. At the recent National Show in Des Moines a new one put out by Mr. A. M. Brand suggestively named Prairie Afire created quite a sensation. Some say equally as good was Mr. Franklin's red S. B. 1. Mr. Edward Auten whose name will always be known from his Nippon Beauty has given us a number of new Japs of which the following have received Honorable Mention or other awards of the American Peony Society: Nippon Maid a dark red, Nippon Red, a rich red, Nippon Splendor a deep red and Nippon Princess a bright cerise pink. Kelway and Son have a number of new ones of which Globe of Light sounds attractive. Doriat of France has introduced a number from Dessert's seedlings Hubert Degris, Joseph Plagne, Jacques Doriat, Rigolote and Elizabeth Dessert are the latest.

For certainty and abundance of bloom, good keeping qualities, home decoration, beauty of form, splendor of color and gorgeous garden effect no flower can excel the Japanese Type Peony. Plant generously and you will not be disappointed.

GEORGE W. PEYTON,
Rapidan, Va.

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